



Washington State Department of Agriculture *Hearing Notice*

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560

Kudzu proposed for 2003 noxious weed list; hearing slated Jan. 22 in Olympia

OLYMPIA – Kudzu, the weed that permanently devastated vast tracts of the U.S. Southeast, would become a Class “A” noxious weed under a proposal to come before the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board this month. *Spartina densiflora* is also suggested for Class “A” designation. Statewide eradication is required by law for Class “A” noxious weeds. The list is the basis for weed control efforts in the state and is reviewed and revised annually under three weed designations – classified as A, B or C.

The board will take comments on the proposed weed list for 2003 at a hearing set for 1 p.m. Jan. 22 in Room 172 of the Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington St., Olympia. The deadline for comments is Jan. 17.

Noxious weeds are non-native, invasive plants that are highly destructive, competitive or difficult to control.

Kudzu, a foreign vine capable of growing 60 feet in a single year, was discovered in Vancouver (Clark County) in September 2001. “Quick action eradicated the invader, and prevented the kinds of ecological and economic damage it and other noxious weeds can cause,” said Steve McGonigal, executive director of state weed board. Its detection, and several sightings in Oregon, triggered a proposal to list kudzu among 114 other noxious weeds on the Washington list.

Two small infestations of the cordgrass *Spartina densiflora* were discovered in 2001 in Grays Harbor and Island counties. The sites have been cleared of the infestations. *Spartina densiflora* is a close relative of the other cord grasses that have invaded thousands of acres of marine tide flats in 10 counties in Western Washington. In 2002, government agencies and property owners used several pest management approaches to treat approximately 2,260 acres in efforts to gain control of four *Spartina* species that infest more than 7,500 solid acres.

Himalayan knotweed, which invades moist, disturbed areas, is proposed for addition to the list as a Class “B” noxious weed. Control of Class “B” weeds is mandated in areas where they are not yet widespread. The proposal, if adopted, would require control of Himalayan knotweed in Chelan, Pend Oreille and Kittitas counties.

Myrtle spurge has been proposed for listing as a Class “C” noxious weed. Such a listing would allow local authorities the option of controlling the plant. Also known as creeping spurge or donkey tail spurge, myrtle spurge has been found growing wild in Grant County, where there have been increasing reports of human skin irritations caused by exposure to its sap.

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Also nominated as a new Class “C” weed is common groundsel, which can cause livestock deaths if hay contains high enough concentrations of this toxic weed.

Non-native types of common reed, which grow in wetlands and other moist sites, have also been proposed as Class “C” noxious weeds. While some strains are native, introduced types are thought to be invasive, forming dense stands that displace native plants and cause other problems.

Other proposals to come before the weed board would change the designated control areas for saltcedar, Japanese and giant knotweeds and meadow, black and brown knapweeds.

A copy of the proposed changes can be obtained from Steve McGonigal, Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board, P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504. Comments can mailed to the above address; faxed to (360) 902-2094; or e-mailed to smcgonigal@agr.wa.gov.

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